

Message Text

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15 S

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 IO-14

SAM-01 SAB-01 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-03

DRC-01 PRS-01 /087 W

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R 090900Z AUG 74

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1125

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 476

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, EG

SUBJECT: IRAQI-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

REF: CAIRO 5640, 5597, 5509 (NOTAL)

1. AS REFTELS MADE CLEAR IRAQI-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS ARE ON UPSWING. SEEN FROM BAGHDAD, THIS IS DUE TO EGYPTIAN DECISION TO ATTEMPT BRING IRAQIS BACK INTO ARAB FOLD RATHER THAN TO ENCOURAGE THEIR FURTHER ISOLATION. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR NAGGAR HAD RECOMMENDED THIS COURSE TO CAIRO FOR MANY MONTHS AND HE IS GRATIFIED THAT SADAT (FOR WHATEVER REASONS) NOW AGREES. NAGGAR TOLD ME HE BROUGHT IN LATE MAY SADAT'S FIRST OFFER TO ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE. IRAQIS HAD RESPONDED POSITIVELY AND NEXT MOVE WAS JULY VISIT OF PRESIDENTIAL COUNSELLOR ASHRAF MARWAN. TALKS HAD BEEN USEFUL AND GOI HAD URGED THAT SADAT VISIT
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BAGHDAD. NAGGAR SAID THIS WAS OUT OF QUESTION FOR TIME

BEING, BUT SADDAM HUSSEIN MAY VISIT EGYPT. NAGGAR SAID IRAQIS ARE VERY BADLY INFORMED AND WERE SURPRISED BY MUCH OF WHAT EGYPTIANS TOLD THEM REGARDING RECENT SETTLEMENT MOVES. CONCURRENTLY WITH INCIPIENT POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS, PLANS FOR EXPANDED ECONOMIC RELATIONS GOING AHEAD AS DRAMATIZED BY RECENT VISIT OF EGYPTIAN MINISTER OF INDUSTRY IBRAHIM SALEM MOHAMMED.

2. EGYPTIAN'S MINISTER'S VISIT WAS GIVEN VERY PROMINENT COVERAGE. PROTOCOL CONCLUDED AGUST 5 CALLS FOR INTER ALIA CREATION OF JOINT COMPANY TO MANUFACTURE TRACTORS AND AUTOMOBILES; COORDINATION OF SPINNING AND WEAVING INDUSTRIES; AND IRAQI COMMITMENT TO MEET EGYPT'S OIL REQUIREMENTS. OTHER PROJECTS MENTIONED IN CAIRO 5509 WERE REFERRED TO IN PRESS BUT AS SUBJECTS OF FUTURE DISCUSSION.

3. DESPITE IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH EGYPT, BAATH POLICY OPPOSING "CAPITULATIONISTS" HAS NOT SOFTENED. BAATH PAPER ATH-THAWARA OF AUGUST 7 ATTEMPTED TO RECONCILE THIS CONTRADICTION IN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "GESTURE OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE". EDITORIAL CITED ECONOMIC AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT AND PARTY POSITION OPPOSING EGYPTIAN POLICY ON CERTAIN ISSUES AND SAID PARTY POLICY "DOES NOT PREVENT US FROM HAVING FRUITFUL AND ACTIVE COOPERATION WITH ARAB COUNTRIES. CONTRARY TO WHAT IMPERIALIST CIRCLES DESIRE, THIS ACCORD SETS TRUE EXAMPLE OF WHAT ARAB SOLIDARITY SHOULD BE UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES."

4. COMMENT: BAKR/ADDAM HUSSEIN REGIME IS IN RECEPTIVE MOOD FOR RAPPROCHEMENT WITH EGYPT AS IT IN PROCESS OF STAKING OUT NON-ALIGNED POSITION (AS EVIDENCED BY SADDAM'S TRIPS THIS YEAR TO INDIA, YUGOSLAVIA AND ALGERIA) AND OF ATTEMPTING TO REGULARIZE ITS RELATIONS WITH OTHER ARABS (MOST RECENTLY BY RECEIVING SHAIKH ZAYID). IMMEDIATE PROBLEM FOR REGIME IS TO RECONCILE THIS PRAGMATISM IN FOREIGN RELATIONS WITH LONG STANDING IRAQI POSITION AGAINST ANY ARAB ACTION THAT HINTS AT RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL, WITH WHOM IRAQ STILL CONSIDERS ITSELF IN STATE OF WAR. ATH-THAAWRA EDITORIAL MAY NOT CONVINCE BAATH MILITANTS, BUT IT IS HEALTHY SIGN THAT PRAGMATIC APPROACH MAY GRADUALLY
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OVERRULE IDEOLOGICAL APPROACH IN FOREIGN RELATIONS AS IT ALREADY HAS DONE IN ECONOMIC POLICIES. LOWRIE

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